

COMMENTS BY DICK DAVIS
PRESIDENT OF SIMSBURY LAND TRUST
IN SUPPORT OF USDA-NRCS-FRPP

10/1/05
BERLIN FRI
PUBLIC FORUM

SLT- like most of our participants, I do this after work, on weekends, time is dear- but we very much wanted to take advantage of this opportunity to speak up is
Support of NRCS FRPP

SLT- 2 recent grants- two largest of 7 remaining family run farms

Why two farms in a small NE suburban community important?

Rich, CT valley soils, rapidly disappearing

Simsbury and surrounding towns are popular bedroom communities, undeveloped land is scarce and more expensive every year - if not now, will never happen

But another reason....flip side to population density...equally important

These farms are 12 and 15 miles respectively from D/T Hartford, a major population center & a capitol city

10,20,30 yrs these protected farms will be the

only opportunity these people have for truly fresh produce,

only opp for suburban boys and girls to learn the imp of farming

their first time summer job may be only time in lives ever exposed to soil and living, growing things

only opp suburban community has to stay connected to land, to watch the seasons change across the fields on their daily commutes

If people don't see on daily basis, don't recognize, don't understand don't value.

This recognition of value is why suburban farms are important to farmer in Iowa and to all of America.

I can say absolutely, the farmland protection in Simsbury would not have happened without FRPP

NRCS commitment gave credibility to our efforts to raise local public and private funds, helped convince the public and individual volunteers and donors that this was possible

The program strengthened public awareness of value of farmland - appreciate what we have and its vulnerability- NRCS personnel timely info, guidance, quick and useful response, weekend time public sessions imp of soils

Strengthened SLT- 775 member families, town wide publicity including farm brochures and newsletter twice annually, every address in town promoting farm land preservation.

Request- restriction on fields- NE farms terrain, wetlands woodlots agricultural benefit and important ingredient and fact of life to farm. Limits on % of non-field land is real impediment to doing more in Simsbury and similar towns.

Dick Davis

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